

TAXING BACHELORS.

Some Cogent Reasons Why Anti-Bachelors Should Pay Contributions to the Public Treasury.

There is a proposition on foot in several of the Eastern States to have laws passed taxing bachelors a certain sum each year. The object is two-fold, to raise money from a non-producing class of citizens, and to place bachelors under a ban, and show them that their manner of living with no object in view is not believed to be of value to a community. There are two sides to all questions, and the Sons do know which side to take, consequently it will, as usual, straddle the fence. Bachelors, who are such by choice, will fight it out on that line and claim that they had rather pay a reasonable tax, or even an exorbitant tax, than to marry. They will illustrate their position by pointing to thousands of married men who would be willing to pay their last dollar in taxes, if they could be placed back in the ranks of bachelors.

The Bachelors will show that on the average they are happier, and more free from care, and enjoy themselves better than the average married man, and on that ground they ought to be willing to pay a tax. They will show that bachelors are, as a rule, round and jolly, while married men look as though something was eating them. There may be certain alleged beauties about the life of a bachelor while he is young and in his prime, but when he begins to get old, and pains rack his body, sickness comes to him at his lonely bed, and he has to be assisted by strangers and hired help, he will realize what a fool he has made of himself and what a failure his life has been. No wife or children to minister to his wants, the bachelor is a most forlorn object. It is then that he begins to look careworn, cross, and as though something was eating him, while the married men who used to look that way are happy and contented. It is better to have some cares and discomforts as married men at the front end of life, when one can endure them and see a piece of clear sky ahead, than to have a careless peace in early life, with a prospect of dark clouds all the time after the individual becomes old enough to need kindly offices from loving friends, instead of hiring somebody to be sorry for him at so much a week. The most pitiful object in life is a sick old bachelor at a boarding-house, a hotel or a hospital. It is then that he thinks over his list of friends, male and female, who have homes and he would give the world to be an inmate of one of those homes. He thinks of the girls he might and ought to have married years ago, and as a hired nurse brings him some pills to take he thinks how much easier he could take them from the hands of a loving wife or daughter. A bachelor with a crick in his back thinks the hand of the hired nurse, who rates it a carry-some, and he thinks of some soft hand he has held in his years ago, and he would give ten years of his life if he had given to the crick of that soft hand the right to ruin his back, but it is ever-lasting too late. If he went searching for a wife now he would have to take one who was as old and toothless as he is, and her hand would be so harsh and bony that she would produce two cracks in the back where only one grew before. He realizes this when he tosses in pain, and the look on his face plainly shows remorse. Bachelor grandmama made formal calls on him when he is sick and washes him a sponge cure, but that does not fill the bill. He dues and the bachelors friends as bearers to his funeral, friends of other days ride in the carriages as mourners, and talk about the blank life of the deceased, but there are no tears, unless there is a sister who comes from a distance to attend the funeral and say a few words about probating the will. The confirmed bachelor is in bad luck, and perhaps he ought to pay a tax, or license, and wear a check on his neck, so that all may know he is a bachelor.—*Papa's Son.*

A LA BERTHA CLAY.

A Romance Without Love, Conceived for the sole Purpose of Making the World Better.

It was a cottage overlooking the sea. From its door, over which the rose climbed, one could look out on the white-winged ships sailing to and fro, and down upon a beach on which the waves were ever gently breaking.

[The only drawback was the fact that old Smith had a mortgage on the said cottage, and that the sewerage about the place was defective.]

It was early in the morning. The bright sun was just rising from his bed in the blue, blue sea, the lark rose from the meadow and soared toward heaven, the lily of kine was heard on every hand, and the silent watchers of night were about to give place to the bustle of a glorious day. One who stood and drank in the picture would have felt entranced.

[It doesn't cost a cent to get that way, and it is twenty per cent cheaper than working up an enthusiasm by the use of lazer beer.]

Suddenly the door was opened and a merry laugh was heard. The fair Ethel had left our couch to greet the rising sun. As she stood amidst the roses, her brown eyes sparkling with enthusiasm—her cheeks glowing with health—her golden hair lit up by the beams of the morning sun, she was the picture of a queen.

I had forgotten to say that she had a syphilic form. This is an oversight for which I can never forgive myself, and I hope the reader will not bear me in mind.

At the gate she paused. Once more she surveyed the placid sea—the romantic beach—the rosy eastern horizon. She was alone with Nature for the moment. Her bosom heaved; her eyes grew brighter, and it was evident that the inspiration was on her. She was about to speak. Just at the instant when her ruby lips were about to part there was a bang on the cottage door and a gruff voice called out:

"What in blazes are you doing out there when your mother is sick and I want breakfast in a hurry?"

The long eyes-lashes of the beautiful Ethel hid the sparkle of her eyes; her classic chin drooped; a look of sorrow crossed her face; for a moment she stood the picture of despair, and the stoniest heart must have been melted by her attitude. Then she sweetly answered:

"I stuck my hunk of gum on the gate post last night, and I'll be judged if some slab-sided slug of humanity hasn't come along and gobbed it!"

[This story didn't have any villain in it. There was no love. There was no grievous trials for any one to pass through, and no narrow escapes to chill the blood. The sole idea was to make the world better. Good-bye!—*Detroit Free Press.*

BACK NUMBER BOB.

A Man Who Has Complete Files of Newspapers for Sale.

In a crowded little basement in upper Broadway, that was lighted by flickering gas-jets, a jolly colored man in the prime of life, with a jolly smile on his face and a tall hat on his head, was swiftly sorting newspapers on a counter. Under his feet, over his head, and on either side of him as he stood working were other newspapers all sorted out and tied up in bundles with paper tags dangling from the strings. Newspaper clippings in glass frames, musty old books and curious old maps filled up all the little remaining space that was not adorned with newspapers.

"Sis," he said, pleasantly, to the reporter who called, "there is not a newspaper published in the town that I can't get you a copy of inside of five minutes, no matter whether it is the first issue that is wanted or to-day."

"How do you manage it?"

"Why, I have made it a business to collect papers all my life, and now I've got it down to a science. I am making living of five hundred dollars a year from that branch of my trade alone. Orders come to me from all over the country, and the newsmen themselves have nicknamed me 'Back Number Bob.'

I took an awful deal of time to get complete files, but I succeeded at last by advertising for them, and now I make it pay me to keep the files complete.

"Every day in the year at least one person comes or sends to me for copies that they can't get anywhere else, and pay me for them."

"What is it worth to fill orders?"

"It depends on the dates wanted. The regular schedule of prices runs as follows: for a copy Under fifteen days old, five cents; premium, under thirty days, ten cents; over thirty days, five cents extra; for each additional month; a year old, fifty cents; each additional year, twenty-five cents.

"The business has grown so," said Back Number Bob cheerfully, "that I have been compelled to give orders to a man to fit me up a storage room out of town. Now I am saving twenty copies of all the dailies published in town, and if the business continues to boom I'll have to double that number. I find that is a very pleasant occupation."—*N.Y. Sun.*

BILL ARP.

He Demonstrates That He is the Boss of His Children and Grandchildren.

Our grandchildren are having a good time now. They have finished breaking the bull calf and are very busy making flutter mills under the fishpond dam. The tail is about five feet, and they keep the water busy and the wheel, too, and are talking about a little saw-mill attachment. I just let them go along and dull my handsaw and gap my axe and waste my maul and leave everything where they didn't, and if they are on a big frolic now, and will have to go back to school in a few days. I overheard them talking about school, and one said "I wish there wasn't such a thing as a school." And another said: "Well, I don't, for the school's all right, and I don't want to grow up a dunce, but I wish my school days were all over, that's what I wish." But Jessie, or Jessie my Jessie, has left us. She has gone to town to a school, and we will not see her but once a day in a week. It is mighty hard on us, for she's the light of the house and the comfort of my age. One by one they have to leave us. Ralph has gone to Florida to live and work, and we are getting lone-some and homesick. We miss them at night and in the morning and at the table. Even the dog looks sad and watches the road for their coming. But all's well that ends well, and we are thankful for the good that is left us. Carl is here yet, and a lot of grand children. They carry their shot-guns, with as much impudence as a town boy carries his pistol in his hip pocket. Two of them made a target of some pine trees in the top of a favorite tree and left the little rocks in the pines. I promised them a whipping, but somehow or somehow else they didn't get it. There is always something around to interfere with my arrangements. So they wanted to go to the base-ball again this evening, and I just put my foot down and said no. I determined to punish them, and now my opportunity has come. When I take a notion I can take a pot on them. I'll show the little rascals how to shoot my bears. I'll teach them a lesson.

LAWRENCE.—They have gone to the kennel with the r material ancestor, and that's kind of a man I am.—*Atlanta Constitution.*

A COMPARISON.

The Difference Between English and American Agriculture.

The English Government, some years since, sent two worthy gentlemen, both experienced agriculturists, to America, to investigate the general character of American agriculture, especially from the point of view of its growing competition with English farmers. The general impression on those who read the report made by these gentlemen, after their investigation was completed, and in fact on many persons who met them, pending its performance, was, that they had not been able to find a thoroughly correct estimate of American agriculture and its possibilities owing to their persistent wearing of British spectacles during their visit in this country. The more we hear and learn about English farming and its methods, the less are we surprised that two gentlemen of the mature years of Messrs. Read and Poll, and accustomed all their lives to the methods, usages and conditions of farming in England, should have been unable to estimate with precision the conditions and possibilities of American farming. The truth is, that the latter is in a transitory condition constantly undergoing changes of an almost kind. These changes are brought about by numerous causes, not only in the varying conditions of supply and demand for the products of the farm, as well as here, though he is in degree there, but in the character and condition of the farmers themselves. The farmer in England seems to add nothing to his capital a good tenant adds to the value of his holding, but that is mainly the landlord's benefit, the farmer himself, it seems, requires a capital to begin with, which in our Western States would be regarded as a small fortune, and even the model or prize farms of which we read, the net income, after paying rent and purchasing manures and food, can not be much more than enough to provide a reasonably comfortable living.

—The *London Engineer* states that decaying wood about the premises is dangerous, setting towards liability to yellow and typhoid fevers. There is no doubt of it neither is there any doubt that for dealers and shop-keepers about farm-houses cause the bulk of annual mosquito fevers.

—Baked Oatmeal One-eighth of a cupful of milk, four eggs, five teaspoonfuls sugar beaten with the eggs, nutmeg and two tablespoonfuls flavoring extract. Scald the milk, pour upon the other ingredients, stir together well, flavor and pour into two clean cups. Set the eggs in a pan of hot water, grate nutmeg upon each and bake until firm. Eat cold from the cups.—*The Household.*

Farms are of a help on the farm than many farmers realize. They destroy many noxious insects that are injurious to the orchard trees; and the poultry manure, of thoroughly composted, is a valuable fertilizer for corn, grass or grain, and is especially adapted to promote vigorous and healthy growth to fruit trees.—*Tree Times.*

—Men like Butler a padding dish and lime juice with mashed potatoes prepared thus. Three cups of potatoe mashed lime from lumps mixed with half a cup of milk, two eggs and a tablespoonful of melted butter. Then put in a layer of chopped beef (or any kind of cold meat), well seasoned with pepper, salt and bits of butter. Cover with more of the potatoe mixture and bake till brown.—*New England Home-stead.*

—A good evergreen hedge may be made of Norway spruce, set two or three feet apart and kept properly cut back with the knife, but never sheared. It is best to be made to stop earlier if two or three bush wires are successively stretched along inside as it is growing up, a branch is easily pulled out. Then put in a layer of chopped beef (or any kind of cold meat), well seasoned with pepper, salt and bits of butter. Cover with more of the potatoe mixture and bake till brown.—*New England Home-stead.*

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